

## **Testimony: “Patient’s Right to Know” Reform**

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Good morning Chairman Haines, Vice-Chairman Callton, Vice-Chairman Darany and Members of the Committee.

My name is Kenneth Elmassian and I am both a practicing physician and the President-Elect of the Michigan State Medical Society, a professional organization representing over 16,000 physicians from across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today in support of House Bill 4524, the “Patient’s Right to Know” Reform. This is important, common sense legislation because it **puts patients first** by giving them more information when they are seeking or receiving health care.

**Let’s be honest—the health care system can be confusing.** In order to make informed decisions, **patients deserve better** than the system is currently giving them—they deserve to have the best, most accurate information about who is treating them and what their health care provider is trained and licensed to do.

Confusing titles and misleading advertisements may cause patients to mistakenly believe they are meeting with physicians or another health care provider when they are actually meeting with someone with a different set of experiences and training altogether. **Our health care system has to do better.**

Eliminating this confusion will protect patients. There is no place for confusion in health care that can put patient safety at risk.

A confusing health care system can lead to medical errors and patient harm when patients or their loved ones mistakenly take advice from medical professionals whose training or experience is something other than what the patient believed or expected.

In my own experience, time and time again I have seen patients understandably overwhelmed by the number of white coats and often indiscernible medical professionals speaking with them before a procedure.

Patients **deserve transparency** when it comes to their health care providers, and what’s more, they are demanding it.

According to a recent national survey commissioned by the American Medical Association, only half of patients believe that it is easy to identify who is a licensed physician—and who is not—by reading their title or other advertising materials.

By contrast, 87 percent of patients believe that health care providers, **including physicians**, should be required to more clearly display their level of training and legal licensure.

Asking medical professionals to display their credentials and capabilities allows patients to make informed choices about their health care. This is a common sense reform.

The Patient's Right to Know Act puts patients first by:

- Requiring all health care professionals to wear a name tag during all patient encounters that clearly identifies the type of license they hold;
- Requires all health care professionals to visibly display their education, training and licensure in their offices; and

➤ **Ensures that any advertisements or professional websites** created to promote health care services clearly identify the type of license the provider holds and the extent of services they are legally permitted to provide.

I will say it again—these are common sense reforms.

Guaranteeing patients the right to know who is delivering their health care will empower them to rely on what their health care providers tell them. This bill will give patients the clarity and transparency they deserve to better make informed decisions. I urge you to vote YES on House Bill 4524 and guarantee the Patient's Right to Know.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about opportunities to put patients first. I would be happy to answer any questions.